

DISCOVERIES AMONG THE RUINS OF NINEVEH AND BABYLON: with Plans of the Ruins, and a Description of the Ruins of the Temple of Bel. By ALFRED H. LAYARD, M.P. New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1853. The same work from press of Harper & Bros., 1853.

This is Mr. Layard's second contribution to our knowledge of Assyrian ruins and remains. His earlier work on Nineveh opened to our inspection a new world of research and discovery. After its eager perusal we seemed to have been reading some romance of the olden time, or an Arab tale full of magic incantations evoked by the potent wand of a travelling dervish. Instead of genii and giants, dwarfs and dragons, the imagination was startled by visions of human-headed lions, eagle-headed warriors, couchant sphinxes, and winged bulls. The open scene of Mr. Layard introduced us into the very cave of the old Assyrian robbers, and revealed to our astonished gaze the monuments of their prowess and the trophies of their marauding expeditions. The treasures of a hoar antiquity long buried in oblivion were disentombed by enterprising "Franks," and borne away from the land of Shinar to be asid and ticketed in the British Museum. These arid and sandy plains, traversed by a Layard and a Botta, were once in the highest sense the very *incunabula gentis nostrae*, the cradles of the human race; for hence issued, as from a great distributing reservoir, the nations which in after ages have filled the earth. The tower of Babel once lifted its proud summit to the sky which now looks down on the hovels and tents of a squalid and nomadic people. In this plain Nebuchadnezzar reared his golden image, boasted of the great Babylon he had built "for the house of the kingdom, by the might of his power and for the honor of his majesty," and here, too, he consorted with the beauties of the field and the chase. The marble halls, now as they were quarried from the superfluous ruins, the tread of the mailed warrior once echoed, and the "sound of revelry by night" here rose and swelled to heaven as reeking incense to the Assyrian Venus. Within these ruined portals, exhumed by modern tourists, Belshazzar, with his lords, wives, and concubines, while quaffing wine from the golden vessels of the Lord's house, turned pale before the handwriting on the wall. "In that night was Belshazzar, the King of the Chaldeans, slain; and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom." Between your crumbling mounds, where once stood the "two-leaved gate," the victorious Cyrus entered on his errand of prophetic doom. Here, too, in after times, Alexander came and saw and conquered, and these massive ruins cover the spot where he died. And in this valley, in still later days, the Caliphs reared the madrasah and the mosque, and lavished on imperial Baghdad, "the Abode of Peace," all the resources of Eastern wealth and art, though the stranger now seeks in vain for the palaces and gardens of Haroun-al-Rashid or the universities and paynim temples of Al Mamoun. Even the very names of these great princes, says Mr. Layard, once the glory of Islam, are almost forgotten, or are only heard in the crowded coffee-house when the Arab story-teller relates his fanciful tale. The land of Shinar is a truly historic land.

Nineveh, "that great city," had long lain in her forgotten tomb, until in these last days Mr. Layard and M. Botta have exhumed from beneath the drifted mud and sand of centuries not only the site of her resting place, but the very monuments of her greatness and the records of her history, and now we have restored to view by Mr. Layard's pen the very palace of Sennacherib as three thousand years ago it was reflected in the waters of the Tigris. Nineveh was destroyed about 1500 years after the founding of Rome, or 600 B. C. When the ten thousand Greeks in their famous retreat marched over this plain, they found it, as Xenophon records, a ruined city called *Larissa*, and in connection with it we have a description of what is now known as the pyramid of Nimroud; but the name of Nineveh had been already forgotten in its very site. The walls which the prophet Jonah in his day found enclosing "an exceeding great city of three days' journey," and which Diodorus Siculus informs us were forty-eight miles in circumference and two hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots might drive one abreast, had already crumbled and fallen or been buried by the sands of the desert in this early period of the Grecian annals: so total and complete was the ruin of "the bloody city," as foretold by the Hebrew seers Nahum and Zephaniah: "I will cast abominable filth upon thee and make thee vile. * * * Nineveh is laid waste: who shall bemoan her?" The destruction which overtook Sardanapalus and his Sybarite host "while they were folded together as thorns and drunken as drunkards" was completed by Astyages, King of the Medes.

The German traveller Niebuhr was, we believe, the first who visited and described the mounds which mark the site of Nineveh. It was nearly a hundred years ago. In 1820 Mr. Rich inspected the spot and carried off a few sand-dried bricks inscribed with the mysterious cuneiform letters. It was not until the year 1830 that we first hear of Mr. Layard, when we find him travelling through Syria, and for the first time visiting the mounds of Kalah Sherghat and the ruins of El-Hather. As he floated down the arrowy Tigris, from Mosul to Baghdad, his attention was drawn to the great mound of Nimroud, and he resolved at some future day to explore the nature and contents of these singular remains, but meanwhile urged upon M. Botta, the French Consul at Mosul, to commence excavations at once in the mound of Kouyunjik, directly opposite that city, who, however, soon transferred the seat of his labors to Khorsabad, a mound twelve miles northeast of Mosul. "To M. Botta belongs the honor of having found the first Assyrian monument." The words are Mr. Layard's, but we may state that he himself first directed M. Botta's attention to the localities where such remains would most probably be discovered, and the excavations of Layard at Nimroud, as detailed in his earlier work, and now at Kouyunjik, as described in the volume before us, far transcend in number and value those which M. Botta has given to the world in the series of engravings published so munificently at the expense of the French Government.

Apart from the historical importance of Mr. Layard's volumes, they are a most interesting and valuable addition to the Literature of Travel. The style of the learned and honorable author is one of the best, either for learned disquisition or easy narrative. He seems equally at home, whether in the excavation superintending his disorderly workmen, or scouring the desert on his dromedary in company with the wandering Bedouin, or sitting on the velvet tapestries of some Turkish host smoking his pipe and sipping Mecha. His tribulations from Pashas and Sherifs, Cadis and Ulemas, though often irritating enough, never seem to discompose his temper, and were indeed relieved by acts of kindness and courtesy without number from Yezidi Cawals, Turkish mufvis, Nestorian Christians, and Bedouin chiefs. His journey from Trebizond to Mosul was replete with incident, and led through a country exceedingly rich in its picturesque scenery and objects of interest to the geographer, the historian, and the architect, passing, as he did, by the side of some of the most important and most interesting of the early Moslem monuments; those monuments of the early Moslem domination; and now by the wayside marble fountain raised by some pious desire of the prophet for the relief of travellers on the dreary plain; and now winding his way through forests clothed with luxuriant creepers and over uplands encumbered by richest flowers and pastures; the threshing-floor, with peasants driving the unmanured oxen over the corn; the groups of Kurdish horsemen, with their long spears and flowing garments; the vast burying-grounds, with their forests of red marble headstones tastefully carved with arabesque ornaments and inscriptions, the conical *turris* rising here and there in their midst; the ruined *khan*, the deep-deep *bazaar*, the Yezidi worship, the Bedouin *gazu* or predatory incursion, the Turkish foray, the journey through the desert, all compose a varied narrative of incident and object

which leaves the reader in doubt whether more to admire Mr. Layard the traveller or Mr. Layard the Assyrian archaeologist. For the present, omitting all reference to Mr. Layard's researches in settling the route pursued by the ten thousand Greeks, and passing by his observations on the moral, social, and political condition of the present inhabitants of these countries, we shall proceed at once to take a hurried glimpse of his more important explorations in Assyrian antiquities.

On the morning after the arrival of Mr. Layard and his party at Mosul he rode over to Kouyunjik, the mound of Nineveh remains in which during his absence excavations had been carried on by Mr. Ross and Mr. Rassam, names familiar to the readers of Mr. Layard's former volume. The walls of the two additional chambers had been laid bare, belonging to the same great palace already entered. On these walls were depicted bas-reliefs representing Assyrian conquests and the siege of a city. Arrangements were immediately made for prosecuting the excavations with renewed energy and dispatch at the mounds both of Kouyunjik and Nimroud. Several new apartments of the great grand palace were soon excavated at Kouyunjik, and opposite Mosul. The walls were completely covered with elaborate and highly-finished sculptures, and in the centre of each side of what seems to have been a grand hall was a portal of entrance guarded by colossal human-headed bulls. These sculptures, like similar ones found on Egyptian monuments, represent the transportation of great stones, the erection of winged bulls, the invasion of a mountainous country, the sack of a city, &c. On these winged bulls are found vignettes recording not only historical events, but the manner in which the edifice itself was erected. The King represented as superintending the building is found to be Sennacherib. One inscription, according to Dr. Hincks, reads as follows: "Sennacherib, King of Assyria, [* * * * *] not yet made out] of wood, which from the Tigris I caused to be brought up the Khazri on boats, I caused it to be carried."

The name of the river Khazri in this inscription very nearly corresponds with that of the small stream which sweeps round the foot of the great mound of Kouyunjik, and the actual position of this stream, now called Khazir, with reference to the Tigris, is found exactly to correspond with a sculpture delineated on one of the palace walls. That Sennacherib is the King thus depicted, and that the palace thus in process of excavation was reared by him, are facts regarded by Mr. Layard as settled beyond all dispute.

We have not time in this connection to relate the process by which a clue has been discovered to the reading of cuneiform characters. Doubts of course still remain in the minds of some as to the reliability of these attempts at deciphering the old Assyrian inscriptions. But, as Mr. Layard remarks, the unbiased inquirer can scarcely now reject the evidence which can be brought forward to confirm the general accuracy of these interpretations. Had they rested upon a single word or an isolated paragraph, their soundness might reasonably have been questioned; when, however, several independent investigations have arrived at the same results, and have not only detected numerous names of persons, nations, and cities in historical and geographical series, but have found them mentioned in proper connexion with events recorded by sacred and profane writers, scarcely any stronger evidence could be desired. In the last chapter of the present volume Mr. Layard has presented us with a summary of these investigations and the processes by which they have been traced to the present results. The learned labors of Col. Rawlinson and Dr. Hincks in England, and of M. de Saulcy on the continent, are worthy of special mention. "There is every prospect of our being able to read," says Mr. Layard, "to ascertain the general contents of nearly every Assyrian record." The Babylonian columns of the Bisan inscription, which is thought to be the Resette stone of the cuneiform character, has been recently published by Col. Rawlinson, and by the aid of this "valuable key" scholars are now enabled to carry on their investigations upon sure grounds.

The continued explorations at Kouyunjik and Nimroud led to discoveries of the greatest importance at both mounds. The grand entrance to the palace of Sennacherib was brought to light, his name being found on all the inscriptions. Among these records we find the name of Sargon, spoken of in the 20th chapter of Isaiah as "the King of Assyria." Profane history has preserved no record of his existence or reign, but we find from these epigraphs that he was no other than the father of Sennacherib, thus furnishing a confirmation of the accuracy of Scripture history as surprising as it is irrefragable. In another passage, though it is somewhat defective, we have an account of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, which is found, in the actors named on both sides and in its incidents, to correspond exactly, save in a single item easily accounted for, with that described in the Book of Kings as having actually occurred during the reign of Hezekiah. Mr. Layard pronounces these independent accounts of the same event as "one of the most remarkable coincidences of historic testimony on record." We value the discovery of this coincidence for a quite different reason from that which we find generally given. The Holy Book does not need confirmation. Its internal evidence outweighs all the testimony of human science, fact, or discovery, though these as cumulative proofs are not to be despised. But the accuracy of the Assyrian records does need confirmation, and when we find them verified by the sacred narrative in this not single instance, in which we are indisputably authorized to check their statements by collating them with the contemporary history of the Hebrew chronicler, we are justified in attaching the greater confidence to the general truth of these old Assyrian documents in stone. The capture of Sackath, as recorded in the Old Testament, is also found depicted in bas-reliefs and described in one of the inscriptions, the evidence being as a whole of the most remarkable character to confirm the interpretation of the epigraphs, and to identify the King who caused them to be engraved with the Sennacherib of the Scripture. The inscription in cuneiform characters runs as follows: "Sennacherib, the mighty King, King of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lakhish, [Sackath of Scripture] I gave permission for its slaughter." In the picture to which this epigraphic attached captives are represented "undoubtedly Jewish in their physiognomy." "They [these bas-reliefs] furnish us," says Mr. Layard, "with illustrations of the Bible of very great importance." We beg to add also that they furnish us very decisive evidence of the accuracy and truthfulness with which the Assyrian Kings have recorded their acts and conquests.

Other corroborative evidence as to the identity of the King who built the palace at Kouyunjik with Sennacherib, scarcely less remarkable than that already given, is found in the discovery of a large number of pieces of fine clay bearing the distinct impression of seal, which there is no doubt had been originally affixed, like modern official seals of war, to documents written on leather, papyrus, or parchment. They were found in a depository in the southwest corner of Sennacherib's palace. The most remarkable and important of these seals is one containing two impressions of a royal signet, which, though imperfect, retained the cartouches perfectly legible. It is one well known to Egyptian scholars as that of the second Sabaco, the Ethiopian of the twenty-fifth dynasty. On the same piece of clay is impressed an Assyrian seal, supposed to be a royal signet likewise. There can be no doubt whatever as to the identity of the cartouches with that of Sabaco. Now, Sabaco reigned in Egypt at the end of the 7th century before Christ, the exact time at which Sennacherib came to the throne. Thus it would seem, says Mr. Layard, that a peace having been concluded between the Egyptian and Assyrian monarchs, probably Sennacherib, the royal signets of the two Kings thus found together were attached to the treaty, which was deposited among the archives of the kingdom. Whilst the document itself, written on parchment or papyrus, has completely perished, this singular proof of the alliance of the two monarchs is still preserved amidst the remains of the state papers of the Assyrian empire; furnishing one of the most remarkable instances of corroborative evidence on record, whether we regard it as verifying the correctness of the interpretation of the cuneiform characters, or as an illustration of Scripture history.

But we cannot further follow step by step the progress

of Mr. Layard's discoveries at Kouyunjik, at Nimroud, at Khorsabad, at Bavian, on the banks of the Khabour, and at Arbhan. Neither can we more than pay a passing allusion to his visiting and exploring the ruins of Babylon, a visit and exploration which did not yield the results expected, but which nevertheless leave upon our minds the impression that further researches need by no means be considered as necessarily abortive, despite the partial failure of Mr. Layard to realize his expectations.

We shall close, therefore, with a cursive catalogue of such interesting objects and facts brought to light by Mr. Layard as most easily occur to our recollection. He found the Assyrians to be acquainted with the structure of the arch in architecture; they built sewers; they knew how to enamel on brick; they compounded paint on the most approved principles of modern chemistry; in metallurgy they were our equals, if not our superiors; they understood the art of inlaying with ivory; they were expert in casting; they embossed vessels and vases with exquisite taste; they manufactured glass and constructed microscopes; they wrought in iron and brass every variety of useful and implement needed in agriculture and war; they engraved on stone and on gems with spirit and truthfulness; they kept regular historical records, almost a journal of the empire, so minute are found to be the accounts of each King's life and progress; they have left in their bas-reliefs terrible memorials of their cruelty in war, the Assyrian conqueror being often represented as flaying alive the prostrate and plumed captives. Sometimes he is beating out their brains with an iron mace, and in other scenes he is depicted in the act of cutting out their tongues. No bas-reliefs, however, as far as we can discover, have been found so discordant to Assyrian morals as those frescoes of Pompeii, which still attest the dissolution of social life, to those of the Romans in the days of Sallust. Neither in their statuary nor in their carved cylinders can the least trace of obscenity or voluptuousness be detected. It is to Grecian art that we owe the forms of sensuous beauty which live and move in "the well-tanned canvasses and festooned stone." The grand and majestic in nature and fancy seem to have inspired the cool and quiet chisel of the Assyrian sculptor, at least in all his most distinctive efforts. Mr. Layard did not succeed in finding any sarcophagi or other vestiges of Assyrian tombs, and hints that they may have been disposed of their dead by incineration, or exposed them, like the fire-worshippers of Persia, until mould remained but their bleached bones. What is still more singular, no clue is given to their customs in this matter by any bas-reliefs or monuments hitherto discovered.

The light which Mr. Layard's discoveries throw on the history and chronology of Assyria could only be properly exhibited in an article devoted to this subject alone, but we are constrained by more pressing engagements to dismiss this interesting volume without further reference to its contents. We commend it to the perusal of every reader and the study of every scholar.

TOM TUGGLE'S REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT.

Further evening, in the foot of the hill, As me and Larrin Lorn, Billy Jones, and Jack Hunter We a takin of a horn; When we had spun our little yarns And sung a few lay songs, We naturally began to talk About our rights and wrongs And says Billy Jones, says he, I can't ahear, can you, To ship in them ere "smokers," With three bilers and a screw Them steamers as perfesses To go ten knots nor more, When hardly is they aile To claw along the shore. Frisky craft indeed they be To keep up the high renown Our "old fogey" captains went. When the "meteor ship" went down. Aye, lovely craft indeed they be To protect our sailors' rights, For which our navy keeps the sea Unwipit in a hundred fathoms. They tell us that we Yankee tars Is the bulwark of the shore, That we're ready when our Uncle wants us, And a lot of gammon more. Yet they clap us "board ship" wessels As contractors please to send, Which never was good for nothin, And we always have to mend. Now this all comes or landlubbers A takin our ships in tow And if you don't stir, stopper it, 'Twill dim our bright stars' glow.

STREET PREACHING.—The evil of street preaching is manifested in the disturbances of public order which it creates. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Baltimore, and now Louisville have each had a popular ferment from the same cause. In these street harangues the speakers, instead of preaching peace and good-will to all mankind, endeavor to stir up a popular commotion, set one-half the population against the other, by bitter and intemperate denunciations of particular religious sects and of political parties. In this respect they are nothing more than common disturbers of the peace, who greatly abuse the liberty of speech for the vilest of purposes.—*Lodge.*

NAVAL.—During last week there was in session at Portsmouth (N. H.) Navy Yard a committee of Naval Constructors, who were called together to examine, with the officers of the yard, the hull of the Franklin ship-of-the-line, and report to the Navy Department her condition, and whether suitable for repairs. The committee spent a whole week in the investigation, and, although their report will not be made public until it appears from the Navy Department, we learn that they found the hull generally in so good a state that the vessel can be raised and made into a more serviceable vessel than she has ever been. Should the plans laid out by the Department it will require a year's labor to make the alterations.—*Portsmouth Journal.*

They have at present at the Gosport Navy Yard a quantity of water which was obtained from Lake Drummond, in the Diemal Swamp, some ten years since. It continues as fresh and pure as when first taken from the lake, and still retains the juniper taste which characterizes this water.

During the severe thunder storm on Monday night the country residence of Mr. G. Washington D. Ramsey, near Cloud's Mill, in Fairfax county, was struck by lightning, and his family had a most providential escape. The lightning struck the post of the bedstead on which some of the family were sleeping, and shivered the rail and post, but did not injure materially those in the bed. A column of the jet of fire of the house was struck and thrown forty yards. The lightning during the storm was very vivid and frequent.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE EXHIBITION.—The number of single ticket admissions on Monday was 2,874; admitted on season tickets, 959; total admissions, 3,833; cash received, \$1,177. The machine arcade is beginning to assume form. The two horizontal engines are on their beds and one of the driving in place. The steam generating apparatus will furnish one hundred and twenty horse-power for constant driving purposes. An immense shearing machine, for cutting iron plates after the patent of Dr. Dick's punch-press, is already set up; also, anti-friction punch for ball-plates.

The Crystal Palace Exhibition involves a total cost of \$260,000, represented by \$400,000 in shares actually disposed of to subscribers, and \$100,000 reserved for speculation for temporary loan to finish the enterprise.

WILLIAM B. BAXTER, of Newburyport, who died a week or two since, has left the principal portion of his property, say about \$40,000, to be divided equally between the American Bible Society, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Education Society, the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, and the American Colonization Society.

MARRIAGE OF ALBION.—The Paris correspondent of the Boston Atlas says: "I have two marriages to announce. Miss MARIAN ALBION has returned to Paris, and is living in her newly purchased house in the Champ Elysees, and her husband has been published. She is to marry Count Popoli. Miss MARIAN, of the Opera Comique, is about to marry M. Carvalho, the pianist."

TO THE EDITORS.

C STREET, JULY 31, 1853.

GENTLEMEN: I send you a letter, just received, from Mr. HARRIS HIRSH, companion of Superintendent BEALE in his central route expedition to California, and which contains information on a subject that concerns the public. It is not the journal which Mr. Hesp was to keep, and did keep, but a letter of results and events in anticipation of that journal. This letter corroborates that of Superintendent Beale, (only with more detail,) received by me last week, and published in the National Intelligencer. It establishes every question connected with the central route upon which its practicality and preference depends for one-half the distance, and confirms all that Fremont and Leroux have been saying. People will be astonished to read that, from the frontier of Missouri to the Valley of San Luis, at the head of the Del Norte, there is not an obstruction to a railroad any way comparable to what is found between Baltimore and Washington, and that the whole route is through a beautiful country, rich in soil, grass, water, and game. In fact, finding game every day itself tells the character of the country; for every Western man knows game is not found in a desert, nor even in a poor country.

The Secretary at War has just said, as reported in a public speech, that in looking for "passes in the mountains the deserts have been skipped, and that these cannot be crossed until science shall find out new modes of travel and of fertilizing the earth." This may be true of the southern routes, on which, in the language of Kit Carson—a language more expressive than the schools can teach or science invent—"a wolf could not make his living;" but it is not true of the central route, nor of any that Fremont recommended. Though not educated at West Point, he happened to know that a pass in the mountain was of no account unless you could get to it, and therefore minutely examined and described all the approaches to all the passes that he recommended, and found them to be good before he recommended the Pass. This was the case with all his recommendations, and especially of the central route, as far as he had explored it—that is to say, to the Valley of San Luis, at the head of the Del Norte. All that he said is now proved to be true, and more than true, by the explorations of Beale's party.

Mr. Hesp mentions three passes through the mountains which divide the waters of the Del Norte from those of the Arkansas, and all good. There are, in fact, five of them, and only differing in degrees of excellence. Still these are not the main passes, which *deboches* into the valley of the Upper Colorado—the Goochocatch. That was at the head of the valley of San Luis; and they were set out for it the next morning after the date of Mr. Hesp's letter.—Beale having returned from his ride of three hundred miles in three days to Santa Fe and back, to put letters in the post office, and "hunt up" a guide in place of the sick Leroux.

The places which Mr. Hesp mentions may all be found on the latest maps, and will show that their line of travel is straight, with a slight inclination to the south. The Huacana river is above one hundred miles long, and fresh with cool and flowing waters from the snow-clad mountains; and the same may be said of the eight beautiful streams—from *Purgatoire* to the *Rio Mohave*, or Wet Mountain Valley creek—which fall into the Arkansas on the same side, in the course of one hundred and fifty miles, and make a lovely country, which invites the flocks and the plough of civilized man.

"Council Grove," where Biggs left his "goat," is one hundred and fifty miles west of the Missouri frontier, in the Plains; "Fort Atkinson," where he left his rheumatism, is three hundred miles further, on the Arkansas river. The time has come, and if, not it, will soon be here, and in claps of thunder, when error shall hide its head, ignorance hold its tongue, and "scientific" speculation cease to baffle the plain question of the plain road to the Pacific. Common sense and practice are at work, and will vindicate truth and justice against the errors of all assailants.

THOMAS H. BENTON.

FORT MASSACHUSETTS, (N. M.) JUNE 8, 1853.

HON. THOMAS H. BENTON:

DEAR SIR: I addressed you a short letter from Fort Atkinson on the 25th May. The weather was so bad (rainy) that we did not leave the fort until the next day. We started on the 26th, though it was still raining hard. On the 31st we passed Bent's Fort, now in ruins, and on the 1st June reached the point on the Arkansas where, according to our maps, we should have found the mouth of the Huacana. I informed you in my last that we had left Leroux at Fort Atkinson, quite ill with pleurisy. We were therefore compelled to rely mainly on our maps, not a man in our party having been over this route before. We did not find the Huacana until we had ascended the Arkansas some twenty-five miles further. Our first view of it was from a long line of bluffs which ran parallel with it on the east. We first saw it about four miles from its mouth, and found it heavily timbered, with the grass, both in the bottom and on the adjoining prairies. It is a bold, rapid stream, from fifteen to twenty yards wide, and about five deep in the channel, near where we made our first camp on it. As it was desirable to cross it that afternoon we could not go to its mouth.

By the four maps we had with us, we found the one compiled by order of Col. Munroe, in 1851, and drawn by Kern, to be the most correct; yet the bearings of the mouth of the Huacana were very erroneously laid down on it. According to our observations Pike's Peak bore N. W., Southern Spanish Peak, S. by W., and Northern Spanish Peak, S. S. W. from the mouth of the Huacana.

After crossing the Huacana our route lay on its western (or left) bank. We found the grasses everywhere abundant and rich, much more so than on the Arkansas. We camped on the night of the 21 a mile below the canon. On the 2d we went to the foot of the mountains. On the 4th we struck the wagon and Indian trails from Hard-scrabble and Greenhorn, leading through the Pass over the Sangre de Christo, and camped that night on the headwaters of the Huacana, a fork of the Huacana. We here found the finest and most luxuriant grasses of any point on our route. There would not be the least difficulty for a small party of men to make an excellent wagon-road through this Pass into the valley of San Luis in a very few days. As it is, wagons can come through.

About three-quarters of a mile from camp, on the morning of the 5th, we came to the headwaters of the Sangre de Christo Creek, (emptying into the Del Norte,) improperly called Indian Creek on the map; and following its course reached at 2.30 P. M. the spot indicated on the map at the War Department as the locality of Fort Massachusetts, about three miles above the junction of Indian and Utah Creeks. Not finding the fort here, we ascended Utah Creek about eight miles, and discovered it at the entrance of a gorge of the mountains. Major Blake, the commanding officer, received us very hospitably.

The fort is a well-built stockade of pine logs, ten feet in height, pointed at the end, and enclosing very comfortable quarters for one hundred and fifty men.

There are no Mexicans settled here, the nearest being on the Cuibere, about thirty miles below. The valley of San Luis is well watered by several fine streams, and affords very excellent pasturage. The game grass grows in it luxuriantly, and wild oats and wheat attain a great height. The land near the streams is very rich and productive.

Not finding it possible to procure mules here, or even a guide or a muleteer, Beale started on the 6th instant for Taos, with Major Blake, to procure them there, if pos-

sible. Several large parties have recently left for California, with sheep and cattle, and have taken with them all the best mules and men. Kit Carson started some time ago with a large flock of sheep.

Our delay here will give rest to the mules, and they are fast picking up strength and flesh on the rich pastures of the Utah Creek. I am having biscuit baked and beef jerked for the remainder of our journey.

We have had an ample supply of game every day since leaving Westport, the Missouri frontier. We found the plains, particularly between the Arkansas and the mountains, teeming with deer, antelope, &c.

I have kept copious notes of every thing that I thought might be interesting, which I hope will be acceptable to you. I have also taken numerous sketches.

Our trip has thus far been most satisfactory. The weather has generally been good, butting the rains of some days. The health of the party is excellent. Mr. Riggs left his goat at Council Grove and his rheumatism at Fort Atkinson. We have not been molested by Indians. We passed daily large trains of wagons and cattle going to California. The mail reaches here in thirty days. We came in twenty-one days, having lost one day at Fort Atkinson. The distance from Independence to Fort Massachusetts, by the Santa Fe route, is over nine hundred miles. By the route we came it is seven hundred and twelve. We did not make a single camp without an abundance of good grass and water, nor saw any where the slightest impediment to a good wagon road.

Beale will probably be back in two or three days, and will write to you before we leave the Fort.

The best pass through the Sierra Blanca or Sangre de Christo mountain is through Robidoux's pass, which is a broad valley, offering no impediment whatever to wagons. A few men could clear away the bushes and dead timber faster than a citizen could travel. You will receive a letter from some citizens of New Mexico, giving a description of the country between the Huacana and Grand River, (the East fork of the Great Colorado of the West,) and confirming Leroux's statements in all essential particulars.

If a wagon-road is made through this portion of New Mexico to California, it would not only shorten the distance now travelled by several hundred miles, but settlements would soon spring up in all the rich valleys which are embraced in these mountains. The fertile valley of San Luis is the best part of New Mexico, but for want of enterprise it is very sparsely settled.

No obstacle to a railroad has thus far been seen by us near as great as was found on the line from Washington to Baltimore; and we are told that the remainder of the route is still more level. Snow seldom falls in Robidoux's pass, and then very lightly. We would have gone through it, only for want of a guide. We took the Indian trail instead of the wagon road. We could see the pass very plainly from our route, and it was evidently but little elevated above the general level at the foot of the mountains. It is a broad smooth valley, with just sufficient elevation in the centre to divide the waters flowing into the Arkansas from those discharging into the Del Norte.

P. S. 14th. Beale has just returned with some mules and a guide. We start early to-morrow. He says that he wrote to you from Santa Fe.

OFFICES AND OFFICE-SEEKERS.

—, GEORGIA, JULY 26, 1853.

MESSES. GILES & SEATON: The opinion is generally entertained that to hold office is a great blessing; that a commission signed by the President of the United States is honor enough to compensate for any sacrifices or suffering that may happen. Will you admit a voice of warning into your columns for the benefit of my countrymen?

Previous to the reign of President JACKSON, while appointments were cautiously made and bestowed for merit alone, there was some *clat* in a commission; but after the "spoils" doctrine obtained, when friends had to be rewarded and enemies punished in the distribution of offices, the previous high moral tone of the country dwindled; men of virtue and capacity were cast aside, and the blustering politician or the bar-room bully was made the depository of Executive confidence. The evil increased under Mr. VAN BUREN's administration, and was so deeply rooted in public affairs that the death of his successor, the lamented HARRISON, was hastened by the horde of office-seekers who rushed upon him as lawful prizes more greedy from the long exile they had suffered from treasury comforts. I was a Harrison man, rendering the best service in my power for his election; but I never applied to him nor to Mr. TILGH for office. When Mr. POTTS came into the Presidency of course I was disqualified for all public employments by the support I had given the immortal CLAY in the contest. After the next election my disability ceased, and with a keen appetite I knocked at Gen. Taylor's door for a public crumb, never having tasted that kind of food, but believing it to be delicious.

Taking an early start, that none might be ahead of me, on the 6th day of March, 1849, I forwarded to the Secretary of the Treasury certain papers:

1. A letter written by myself, requesting a clerkship in which I might be useful from long experience in accounts and in the construction of tables, many of which, intricate and laborious, I enclosed in printed slips from the newspapers as a specimen. I also claimed practice in composition, so as to prepare official letters.

2. A letter from a gentleman who is now the Governor of an adjoining State, informing the President that I was trustworthy, and would make a good consular agent or secretary of legation.

3. A letter from an ex-Governor and Senator in Congress, opposed to me in politics, yet cordial to my character and qualities.

4. A letter from a Justice of the Supreme Court, strongly urging my qualifications, and dwelling on points of character which propriety forbids me to name.

5. A letter from a Representative in Congress, who had served the country in a diplomatic station abroad, expressing his satisfaction that I had consented to take office, and warmly soliciting the President in my behalf.

6. The opinion of a professor of political economy that I was competent and faithful in arranging tables of finance, commerce, and other statistical matter, and in illustrating any subject connected therewith.

With these testimonials I felt certain of success. Did any man ever present better recommendations? I quoth I to myself. For two long tedious months I expected by every mail a letter from the Secretary as the very man he wanted, to be a sort of chief among the green-subsidaries. No such document came. I then turned my batteries against the Secretary of the Interior, and gave him copies of all that I had sent to the other Department. Neither of these efforts ever *condemned to reply to me*, and with mortified spirits I brooded over the "ingratitude of republics," but comforted myself with the suspicion that the Secretaries were poor judges of merit, or that other applicants had made out equally as good cases on paper, and that local considerations had turned the scale in their favor. Thus I knocked at the door of the Government, and thus was it not opened to me. I am now prepared to say that the "grapes are sour," and shall give my reasons.

From March until October, 1849, more than six months, I was in alternate moods of expectation and despair in regard to office. Perhaps the Secretaries were so busily occupied that they had not read my letters. Then I was certain they had examined them, as in duty bound. I awoke from my slumber, from office-envy, asked no favors from the President or his Secretaries, and casting myself in another direction for employment, I now rejoice that my application was disregarded. And here I am at the point I desire to dwell on, in order, if possible, to reconcile others to a private life as the most successful and happy.

The idea that a clerkship in one of the Departments is a situation of value in any sense is a gross error. The income will hardly pay expenses. If the incumbent has a family, the house rent, furniture, servant hire, marketing, and the style of dress required to figure in society and to maintain caste at Washington, will more than sponge up a thousand or twelve hundred dollars, leaving him deeply entangled in debt, besides the risk of being dismissed at every change of Administration. The utmost he can do, while toiling for the Government, is to feed

and clothe his family—not a dollar left as a fund for other business.

It may be replied by some that the opportunity to see the great men of the republic and of foreign countries who collect officially at Washington; the privilege of hearing the debates in Congress; of attending the President's levee; of examining the contents of the Patent Office; of gazing at the Washington Monument and the Smithsonian Institute; of seeing the elegant styles, the refinement, the nobility and extravagance of Ambassadors, the beautiful and accomplished ladies, all forming a school to mould and perfect character on a superior scale, are objects worthy of any hazard or ambition. Office-seekers believe the delusion, and struggle for it. I pity them, many capable and well-meaning, who might succeed in the business walks of life. I look upon a man who depends on office for his support as having a very poor title to the good things of life. The passion for office is debasing in its effects. It soon begets an artificial behavior, a trimming policy, and, more to be regretted than all, principles contracted and selfish, absolutely grudging success to others. Of course this description does not apply to every man who troubles the President or the Heads of Departments for office; yet it is nevertheless true in the main.

I was shocked to notice, some months ago, that of the six hundred clerkships at Washington, equal to about three for each representative in Congress, each member of the dominant party claimed the right to supply them from his district. This was the party drill to carry out the maxim that to the victors belong the spoils. The Government, as conquered plunder, to be sliced into rations for party cormorants! Think of it, and blush with the pride and dignity of an American patriot!

Instead of a system thus corrupting to the public morals, it ought to be the rule that all competent and faithful officers below the Cabinet and principal bureaus should be retained under each successive Administration, without inquiring after the political creed of any of them. If they all came from two or three adjoining States, or even belonged to the District of Columbia, it should be no objection. So the ripe qualification and the tried integrity were secured, no other test should be adopted. The Government would become purer and the people essentially benefited by such a condition of things. May we not hope, discouraging as the prospect is, that some future President will have virtue and courage enough to set the example in this particular?

President PIERCE has been annoyed almost to death by office adventurers, and he would have relieved him of the most disagreeable of his official cares had the course I suggest been observed by his predecessors, so as to have the moral sanction of a law when he came into power; for this very question of "spoils" has soured his character to more criticism than any other branch of his Administration. All just minded men see the evil, and ought to stand calmly outside the ring in which the gladiators over the carcass of victory are intent in signaling their brute courage with the same ferocity and with about as much glory as combatants at a Spanish bull-baiting. Let it rather be a reproach to an office, so that the President may have full liberty to select his own agents in executing the high trust for which he must respond to the people.

[Had our worthy correspondent seen the bushels of letters and recommendations, similar to his own, which loaded down the tables of the Secretaries, as they do the tables of all Secretaries on the accession of every new Administration, he might well have supposed it possible that his were not read by any body but the clerk to whom was assigned in every Department the duty of endorsing and filing them away for reference. His reflections on the exercise of the appointing power, on office-seeking, and the injuries to individuals and to the public